

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01
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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9891
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMCONSUL MUNICH
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USNATO
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN
USDIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BUCHAREST 3832

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR PINT SHUM HU RO UR CH
SUBJECT: BESSARABIA, TRANSYLVANIA AND SOVIET-ROMANIAN
RELATIONS
CINCEUR FOR ECJ2
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1. SUMMARY. AS WAS FORESEEABLE (REF D), ROMANIANS HAVE
NOW RAISED BESSARABIAN ISSUE IN HIGH PROFILE WITH ARTICLE IN PARTY
JOURNAL WHICH IS STUDDERED WITH PHRASES IMPLICITLY CLAIMING
PROVINCE AS ROMANIAN. MEANWHILE, TRANSYLVANIAN POLEMIC
CONTINUES AND HAS SPREAD TO MASS-CIRCULATION PUBLICATIONS
WHERE IT PROVIDES COUNTERPOINT TO STEADY MEDIA DRUMBEAT ON

VIRTUES AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF ROMANIAN NATIONALITIES POLICY WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MAGYARS. WE HAVE NO WAY OF ASSESSING POSSIBILITY OF HIGH-LEVEL DEAL (REF A) FOR ACTION PROGRAM TO CALM MINORITY DISSATISFACTION, BUT THERE IS SOME OVERLAP BETWEEN PROBLEMS ADDRESSED IN LATEST COMPLAINTS AVAILABLE BETWEEN PROBLEMS ADDRESSED IN LATEST COMPLAINTS AVAILABLE IN WEST AND CEAUSESCU'S MARCH NATIONALITIES SPEECH, AND WE HAVE SOME SLIGHT SENSE THAT TEMPERATURE OF TRANSYLVANIA POLEMIC IS PROVOKING SECOND THOUGHTS HERE (AND POSSIBLY IN BUDAPEST). MEANWHILE, HOWEVER, SAVVY YUGOSLAV SOURCE SAYS LOCAL SOVIETS ARE "FURIOUS" OVER BESSARABIA ARTICLE, AND IS CONCERNED AT WHAT HE SEES AS DOWNWARD SPIRAL IN SOVIET-ROMANIAN RELATIONS ROOTED IN SOVIET UNHAPPINESS WITH CEAUSESCU'S MIDEAST APPROACH AND US AND CHINA TRIPS, AND ONLY TOPPED OFF BY NEW SLASH ON BESSARABIA. WITH FAR EAST TRIP OVER, ROMANIANS AND HUNGARIANS MIGHT WELL CHOOSE TO LET RECENT TRANSYLVANIA POLEMIC ENTER HISTORY AS LATEST IN LONG SERIES. HOWEVER, IF SOVIETS (AND ROMANIANS) SEE IT AS PART OF GENERAL DETERIORATION, FUTURE IS MORE OPEN-ENDED, AND EXTENDS WELL BEYOND NARROW SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL/MINORITY ISSUES. END SUMMARY.

2. IN JUST-RECEIVED 1978 SECOND NUMBER OF PARTY HISTORY INSTITUTE JOURNAL ANALE DE ISTORIE, INSTITUTE DIRECTOR (AND RCP CC FULL MEMBER) ION POPESCU-PUTURI DELIVERS MOST CONFIDENTIAL

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STINGING STATEMENT OF ROMANIAN APPROACH TO BESSARABIA EMBASSY'S COLLECTIVE MEMORY CAN RECALL FOR MANY YEARS. ALTHOUGH POPESCU ENJOYS CERTAIN PERSONAL MARGIN OF MANEUVER AS VENERATED "OLD COMMUNIST," PIECE ON THIS TOPIC IN THIS JOURNAL IS AUTHORITATIVE ENOUGH TO BE PROVOCATIVE. OLD (PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED) FEATURES INCLUDE LENIN'S DEFINITION OF CZARIST RUSSIA AS "PRISON OF PEOPLES" AND FOND RECOLLECTIONS OF LENINIST NATIONALITY POLICY CALLING FOR RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION FOR SUBJECT PEOPLES. NEW FEATURES INCLUDE EXTENSIVE DOCUMENTATION RUSSIAN FOREIGN MINISTER STUERMER'S THOUGHTS OF PARTITIONING ROMANIA TO OPEN WAY TO STRAITS, EXACT STATISTICAL BREAKDOWN ON BESSARABIAN "COUNTRY COUNCIL'S" MARCH 1918 VOTE TO JOIN ROMANIA (INTENDED TO PROVE COUNCIL'S REPRESENTATIVENESS), AND RARE IF NOT UNIQUE MENTION OF UKRAINE AMONG SUBJECT STATES (POLAND, FINLAND) DECLARING INDEPENDENCE AT THAT TIME. PIECE IS STUDDED WITH PHRASES WHICH IMPLICITLY CLAIM BESSARABIA AS ROMANIAN: "THE ROMANIAN PROVINCE BETWEEN PRUTH AND DNIESTER," "UNIFICATION OF THE MOLDAVIAN REPUBLIC WITH THE MOTHER COUNTRY," "THESE HISTORICALLY ROMANIAN PROVINCES."

3. LATTER NATURALLY INCLUDE TRANSYLVANIA, AND POPESCU-

PUTURI COMPLACENTLY QUOTES ARTICLE 45 OF 1920 TREATY OF
TRIANON IN WHICH HUNGARY RENOUNCES RIGHTS AND RECOGNIZES
THAT TRANSYLVANIAN TERRITORIES ARE PART OF ROMANIA.
NEVERTHELESS, ARTICLE'S MAIN EMPHASIS IS CLEARLY ON
BESSARABIA.

4. MEANWHILE, TRANSYLVANIAN POLEMIC DIRECTED AT HUNGARY
AND WESTERN PUBLIC OPINION CONTINUES, AND IS SPREADING TO
VERY LARGE-CIRCULATION MASS MEDIA. R CURRENT SITUATION OF
MAGYAR MINORITY, CEAUSESCU ADDRESSED IT AGAIN IN INTERVIEW
WITH DAILY TELEGRAPH PUBLISHED IN MAY 14 SCINTEIA, AND
REFERRED DIRECTLY TO "RELATIVELY FEW" NATIONALISTS AND
CHAUVINISTS, BOTH HUNGARIAN AND ROMANIAN, IN ROMANIA.
IN MAY ISSUE (1978 NO. 10) OF RCP THEORETICAL JOURNAL ERA
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SOCIALISTA, DEPUTY EDITOR ION MITRAN RESTATED RCP MINORITIES
POLICY IN TERMS LARGELY STANDARD EXCEPT FOR IDEA THAT
NATIONALITIES AS SUCH ACTUALLY EXIST ONLY IN SPECIFIC
AND CONCRETE CONTEXTS. (COROLLARY WOULD BE THAT THERE IS NO
SUCH THING AS "HUNGARIAN NATION" OR "HUNGARIAN PERSONALITY"
DEFINABLE IN ABSTRACT TO BE THREATENED BY ROMANIAN POLICY
AND PRACTICE.) PSEUDONYMOUS SERIES BY D.P. CRIS IN
WEEKLY MASS-CIRCULATION CULTURAL EVENTS PROGRAM SAPTAMINA
CONTINUES TO SLASH AWAY AT OBSCURE HISTORY OF ROMANIANS BY
A HUNGARIAN NAMED ENDRE HARASZTI; FROM STYLE AND RUMOR
MILL, CRIS APPEARS TO BE WRITER RATHER THAN HISTORIAN
HIMSELF. AND SCARCELY A DAY GOES BY WITHOUT NEW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 2 BUCHAREST 3832

MATERIAL IN MASS MEDIA DETAILING VIRTURES AND
ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF ROMANIAN NATIONALITIES POLICY, WITH
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MAGYARS.

5. REAL SITUATION BENEATH THE WAR OF WORDS IS
NATURALLY MUCH MORE OBSCURE. AS NOTED REF B, EMBASSY
WILL BE STEPPING UP EFFORTS TO MONITOR IT IN TRAVEL
PROGRAM AND IN BUCHAREST. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO WAY YET
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OF ASSESSING POSSIBILITY THAT FAZEKAS-TAKACS-SUTO
"MEMORANDS CRISIS" IN APRIL MAY SIGNAL HIGH-LEVEL DEAL
INVOLVING CEAUSESCU TO DEFUSE MAGYAR MINORITY DISCONTENT
BY SELECTIVE ACTION PROGRAM, AS SUGGESTED REF A, IT IS
WORTH POINTING OUT THAT CEAUSESCU'S MARCH SPEECH TO
NATIONALITIES COUNCILS (REF E) DID IN FACT ADDRESS A
NUMBER OF DEMANDS IN TAKACS MEMORANDUM (AS DESCRIBED
REF C), FOR INSTANCE, HE PROMISED SOME REINING-IN OF
PRACTICE OF DISPERSING NATIONALITY CADRES OUTSIDE AREAS
OF ORIGIN, BUT APPEARED LESS FORTHCOMING RE PROPORTIONAL
REPRESENTATION PARTY ORGANS AS SUCH (FOR PARTY
CADRES, "PROBLEMS ARE POSED AT HIGHER LEVEL").

6. WE ALSO HAVE SOME SLIGHT SENSE IN BUCHAREST
CONVERSATIONS THAT RISING TEMPERATURE OF TRANSYLVANIAN
POLEMIC IS PROVOKING SECOND THOUGHTS. VISITING FINANCIAL
TIMES CORRESPONDENT PAUL LENDVAI WAS FULL OF FIRE FOR
MAGYAR MINORITY RIGHTS (AND ANGER AT HEAVY ROMANIAN
POLICE SURVEILLANCE) WHEN HE MET DCM MAY 19, AFTER HIS
BUDAPEST VISIT WITH ILLYES AND YOUNG INTELLECTUALS
AROUND HIM, BUT NOTED HE UNDERSTOOD HUNGARIAN POLITBURO

HAS TAKEN DECISION TO PUT CLAMP ON PUBLIC POLEMIC FROM HUNGARIAN SIDE. WHEN DCM MENTIONED TIDBIT TO POPESCU-PUTURI AT LUNCHEON MAY 26, LATTER SAID IF IT WERE TRUE IT WOULD BE A GOOD THING, SINCE HUNGARIANS HAVE NOTHING TO GAIN BY POLEMIC. IN FACT, WHEN HE HAD BEEN IN BUDAPEST "A FEW WEEKS AGO," HUNGARIAN FRIEND HAD TOLD HIM DIFFERENCE BETWEEN TWO PEOPLES IS THAT HUNGARIANS ARE ALWAYS JUMPING OVER HORSE FROM ONE SIDE TO OTHER, AND NEVER MANAGE TO LAND ON IT AND RIDE AS ROMANIANS HAVE SUCCEEDED IN DOING. AS FORMER AMBASSADOR TO HUNGARY (IN 1950'S), POPESCU SAID, HE KNEW THERE WAS GOOD FEELING FOR ROMANIANS AT TOP AND BOTTOM OF HUNGARIAN SOCIETY, AND

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THAT ANTI-ROMANIANISM IS LIMITED TO NARROW MIDDLE-CLASS LAYER INCLUDING DECLASSE INTELLECTUALS. AGITATION OVER TRANSYLVANIA ORIGINATES INSIDE, "BUT MAINLY FROM OUTSIDE."

7. ON OFFICIAL HUNGARIAN SIDE OF POLEMIC, HUNGARIAN DCM KALMAR SAID JUNE 5 THAT ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN NO FORMAL STATE OR PARTY DECISION, A CERTAIN "TRANQUILLIZATION" SHOULD BE DISCERNIBLE SOON, AS FAR AS HUNGARIANS ARE CONCERNED: "WE ARE VERY PRUDENT." ON ROMANIAN SIDE OF POLEMIC, ON JUNE 1 DCM ASKED MAGAZIN ISTORIC EDITOR CRISTIAN POPISTEANU (STILL FRESH FROM MARCH-APRIL TRIP TO US WITH ROMANIAN MAGYAR INTELLECTUALS) WHETHER GOR ACTUALLY BELIEVES THERE IS A HUNGARIAN CAMPAIGN IN US PUBLIC OPINION THAT NEEDS REBUTTING, AND POPISTEANU REPLIED HE HAD DISCOVERED IN US THAT CAMPAIGN HAS EFFECT ONLY IN CONGRESS: AMERICAN ACADEMICS HE HAD TALKED TO WERE NOT EVEN AWARE OF IT.

8. ALTHOUGH ANALE HAS SMALL CIRCULATION AND POPESCU-PUTURI'S ARTICLE MAY NOT CARRY TOTAL RCP IMPRIMATURA, LOCAL SOVIETS ARE EVIDENTLY QUITE UPSET BY IT, ACCORDING TO YUGOSLAV COUNSELOR POPOVIC. SOURCE, WHO HAD BEEN TO SOVIET EMBASSY SAME DAY, TOLD DCM JUNE 2 THEY ARE IN FACT "FURIOUS." HIS OWN CONCERN, SAID POPOVIC, WAS OVER WHAT HE SEES AS OVERALL DETERIORATION IN SOVIET-ROMANIAN RELATIONS, MARKED BY SOVIET DISPLEASURE OVER ROMANIAN APPROACH TO MIDDLE EAST, THEN OVER US TRIP AND NOW OVER FAR EAST TRIP. JUNE 2 SOVIET INTER-LOCUTOR HAD BEEN DEVELOPING ELABORATE (AND FANTASTIC) SCENARIO WHEREBY CEAUSESCU WOULD HAVE CARRIED MESSAGE TO HUA KUO-FENG FROM CARTER AND SENT RETURN MESSAGE FROM PEKING THAT BRZEZINSKI COULD COME. POPOVIC THOUGHT AMBASSADOR DROZDENKO'S PROLONGED ABSENCE IN USSR (ALMOST COINCIDENT WITH TWO-WEEK FAR EAST TRIP) WAS CERTAINLY DIPLOMATIC RATHER THAN MEDICAL AS SOVIETS CLAIM. (EMBASSY MAY GET BETTER FIX ON SOVIET ATTITUDE AT BILATERAL LUNCHEON NOW SCHEDULED FOR JUNE 6.)

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9. COMMENT. AS NOTED REF D, IT WAS FORESEEABLE THAT ROMANIANS WOULD RESPOND TO TRANSYLVANIAN POLEMIC BY RAISING BESSARABIAN ISSUE, AS WELL AS BY CARRYING THEIR OWN TRANSYLVANIAN CASE TO DOMESTIC AND WESTERN AUDIENCES. BUT IT IS HARDER TO PREDICT NEXT STEPS NOW THAT BESSARABIAN SPEAR HAS BEEN WIELDED. IF EFFECTS OF SOVIET DISPLEASURE WERE NOT AT ISSUE, HUNGARIANS AND ROMANIANS MIGHT WELL CHOOSE TO LOWER DECIBELS, NOW THAT CEAUSESCU'S FAR EAST TRIP IS OVER, AND LET 1978 POLEMIC ENTER HISTORY AS ONE MORE OF A LONG POSTWAR SERIES. IF, HOWEVER, SOVIETS (AND ROMANIANS) CHOOSE TO SEE TRANSYLVANIAN-BESSARABIAN NEXUS AS PART OF GENERAL DOWNWARD SPIRAL IN THEIR OWN RELATIONS ROOTED IN LARGER FOREIGN POLICY CONSIDERATIONS -- US, CHINA, THE FATE OF "DETENTE" -- THE FUTURE IS MORE OPEN-ENDED, AND EXTENDS QUITE BEYOND NARROW SOUTHEAST EUROPEAN TERRITORIAL/MINORITIES FOCUS OF THIS CABLE.
AGGREY

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